



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

GUINEA – Complex Emergency

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2001

January 31, 2001

Background

- For more than a decade, Guinea has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Most of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees have been living in camps along Guinea's borders with these two countries. Beginning in September 2000, a series of armed incursions near Gueckedou resulted in substantial loss of life, destruction of property, loss of crops and other means of livelihood, and the displacement of tens of thousands of Guineans and refugees.

Numbers Affected

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are at least 500,000 refugees living in Guinea. Of this total, approximately 330,000 are Sierra Leonean and 130,000 are Liberian refugees.
- UNHCR estimates that there are 70,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the area of Guinea known as the 'Parrot's Beak', in the southwestern Forest Region. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimated that there were 30,000 IDPs in the Kouroussa, Dabola, and Dinguiraye areas of central Guinea. The Government of Guinea (GOG) estimates there are a total of 200,000 IDPs throughout Guinea. However, due to the prevailing insecurity, exact numbers of those affected are difficult to obtain.
- U.N. sources estimate that more than 1000 people have been killed in fighting between GOG forces and anti-government factions since September 1, 2000.

Current Situation

- Violence erupted in the Gueckedou area of the Forest Region in January, 2001 as GOG military forces and anti-government factions clashed in the Gueckedou area resulting in an unconfirmed number of deaths. This area hosts several refugee camps. Sporadic attacks have taken place since early December 2000 when hundreds of people, including U.N. relief workers, were killed in clashes between the two groups in the Gueckedou and Kissidougou areas.
- On January 30, UNHCR reported that they were forced to withdraw from the Gueckedou and Kissidougou areas due to renewed fighting. UNHCR is preparing to move refugees from the Parrot's Beak to camps north of Kissidougou because it is unable to deliver aid to 250,000 refugees and IDPs in the Parrot's Beak.
- The deteriorating security situation continues to trigger mass population movements within Guinea and across the borders into Sierra Leone and Liberia. Refugees and IDPs in Gueckedou and surrounding areas continue to flee toward Conakry, Kankan, and Nzerekore in hope of returning home or finding refuge from the attacks. Sierra Leonean refugees in the Nyaedou camp north of Gueckedou relayed to UNHCR officials that they would rather return home than deal with the precarious security situation in Guinea and the sporadic delivery of humanitarian assistance. Since September 2000, more than 28,000 Sierra Leonean refugees have returned to Freetown.
- On January 4, the USAID Mission reported that all Sierra Leonean refugees had vacated the Sierra Leonean Embassy compound in Conakry. The refugees are now being sheltered in a transit camp in Conakry. The site has already reached capacity and a second site is being planned to accommodate the newly arriving refugees.
- Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees continue to return to their countries by ship from Conakry. There are currently two ships with a combined capacity of 800 people that are able to transport up to 2,550 Sierra Leonean refugees to Freetown per week. More than 4,700 refugees have returned to Sierra Leone by ship since December. On January 17, UNHCR reported that the Government of Liberia (GOL) sponsored a ship to return 414 Liberians to Monrovia.

Health

- The World Health Organization (WHO) is reporting an outbreak of yellow fever in central Guinea. Since the first confirmed case was reported on October 12, 2000, there have been a total of 666 reported cases resulting in 218 deaths as of January 17. Since January 1, 16 suspected cases and one death have been reported. Recent cases have been reported in the Labe, Mamou, and Kindia areas.

Food Security

- The U.N.'s World Food Program (WFP) and other relief agencies have only been able to reach vulnerable groups intermittently during the previous since November. WFP had provided daily food distributions to 220,000 people. The USAID Mission in Conakry reports that WFP is unable to carry out food distributions in

the Parrot's Beak due to security concerns. As of late December, WFP reported it had stocks of 8,500 MT of food commodities in Conakry and 2,600 MT warehoused in Gueckedou.

- CARE International (CARE) has given notice to UNHCR that it will discontinue food distributions and plans to withdraw from Guinea by the end of February. As of mid-January, UNHCR did not have a replacement partner identified, making food distribution to areas of the Forest Region more difficult.

Political/Military

- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Heads of State approved the deployment of military troops and observers to the Guinea-Liberia-Sierra Leone border during their December summit. ECOWAS announced at their January, 2001 meeting that 1,676 soldiers from Nigeria (776), Mali (500), Niger (200), and Senegal (200) would be deployed to Guinea by mid-February with an initial mandate to remain six months.

U.S. Government Response

- USAID/OFDA responded to U.S. Charge d'Affairs Timberlake Foster's disaster declaration on November 29, 2000 with \$25,000 to fund a grant to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for emergency assistance to IDPs. USAID/OFDA dispatched a permanent West Africa Regional Advisor to Conakry in December 2000. The Regional Advisor will assess the current IDP situation, humanitarian conditions, and provide response options for USAID/OFDA.
- USAID Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) has approved 11,920 MT of food commodities, with an estimated value of \$7,346,900 to WFP for use in Guinea as part of WFP's regional Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation in FY 2001.

Relief Efforts

- On January 17, UNHCR, with the assistance of the Guinea Red Cross/Red Crescent Society, provided one month of food rations to 55,000 refugees in the Nyaedou and Massakoundou camps near Gueckedou. In late December, UNHCR deployed three emergency teams, a total of 52 people in all, to affected areas of Guinea and Sierra Leone. These teams assessed the humanitarian situation and provided assistance to refugees and IDPs in the Gueckedou area. UNHCR relief efforts have been hampered by continued insecurity in the region.
- On January 23, ICRC announced that it was preparing an IDP census of the Forest Region. ICRC also performed an IDP census of the Upper Region in January. ICRC distributed WFP food to 5,700 IDPs in the Forecariah area during November and to 8,000 IDPs in the Kindia area during December. ICRC food distributions to the Gueckedou area have been hindered by the tense security situation.
- In January 2001, Medecins sans Frontieres and Hopital sans Frontieres initiated a yellow fever vaccination campaign in the areas of central Guinea most affected by the outbreak. The European Commission (EC) approved a grant of \$1.5 million to fund the vaccination campaign.
- On December 29, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) reported that in response to the yellow fever outbreak, 5,633 volunteers have been trained and deployed to disseminate prevention messages and steps to take in case of infection. IFRC has also assisted UNHCR and WFP with food distributions to refugees and IDPs.
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has provided two chartered ships to assist Sierra Leonean refugees in returning to Freetown. The ships transport refugees six days a week from the transit camp in Conakry to Freetown.

U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance in FY 2001

- To date, USAID/OFDA has provided \$25,000 in response to the FY 2001 disaster declaration for Guinea.
- USAID/FFP has provided an estimated \$7,346,900 in Title II emergency funding in FY 2001.
- The Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (State/PRM) is anticipating a funding level similar to FY 2000, during which State/PRM provided \$11,000,000 to refugee programs in Guinea.

USAID/OFDA	\$25,000
USAID/FFP	\$7,346,900
Total USG Assistance	\$7,371,900